

Community Voices / Budget Choices Facilitation Committee
Minutes, July 31, 2008

1. Meeting called to order at 9 AM
2. Members present: BenEzra, Donta-Venman, Feldman, Gawle, Hanner, Saul
BCG liaison Steinberg, Select Board liaison O'Keeffe
3. Members Absent: Jolly, Rhodes, Spurgin, staff liason Musante
4. Guests and presenters were introduced:
Vivian - Acting Superintendent; Brighty, Churchill - School Committee;
Detweiler - ARPS Finance Director; Geryk & Kohler - ARPS Staff
5. Approval of Minutes:

July 24, 2008 minutes, version written by Co-Chair M. Hanner, were approved. Minutes were approved for the following dates: May 15, May 21*, May 29*, June 12, June 19, June 26* (*as corrected). These minutes will be given to John Musante for filing with the Town Clerk.

Concern was expressed that, with the Town website in transition, the Minutes and other information about our Committee are not getting presented to the public.

6. Subcommittees:

The Subcommittee structure and membership were discussed. It was agreed that the 3 Subcommittees be merged into 2:

1. Presentation and Data Analysis
Alison Donta-Venman (lead), Gawle, Vorwerk-Feldman, Saul, Steinberg
Stan, Kathy, Bob, Andy
2. Media and Outreach
BenEzra, Hanner, Jolly, Rhodes, Spurgin, Steinberg

The Co-Chairs requested that the Subcommittee leads arrange a set meeting time each week that can be posted to comply with the open meeting law

7. Presentation of budget scenarios for the schools

The school presentation was made by Detweiler, after an introduction by Churchill, who stressed that the schools have made cuts every year for the past 5 years. Detweiler reviewed written reports on 5 year scenarios and projections for elementary and secondary school budgets and services. (Written reports appended to Minutes; attendees received copies.) Major interest and questions centered around the need for additional data, including the state funding cut that contributed to the present deficit. In addition to the impact of state funding cuts, the committee wants to further study other funding streams (e.g. town/gown, federal, etc.). Committee members stressed that we need to understand what cuts are required to meet a Level Funding budget; also, a common definition of "level funding" is required among Town, school, and library.

Detweiler noted that much of the financial information we seek is on the ARPS website.

Next week's meeting will focus on a discussion of the goals and plans for outreach. Questions for John Musante regarding revenue projections will also be on the agenda.

Adjourn: 11:00 AM